

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 16, 18-27, 34-44, and 47-49 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 22, 26, and 43 have been amended. Claims 50-65 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, based on the Examiner's indication that these claims constituted different inventions and were subject to a restriction. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and the arguments provided below.

Interview Summary

Applicants thank the Examiner for the interviews granted to Applicants' representative, Mr. I. McIntyre, on Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th August. During those interviews, the Examiner brought the following references to the attention of Applicants' representative: U.S. Patent No. 6,178,002 and U.S. Application Publication No. 2003/0072010 A1. The claims were discussed in view of these references. The Examiner indicated that the changes to the claims provided above would put the claims into condition for allowance over the prior art.

On Tuesday 17th August, Mr. McIntyre discussed the double patenting rejection with the Examiner's Supervisor, Mr. D. Wong. This case and application serial nos. 10/014,278 and 10/015,151 are subject to mutual provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejections. Mr. McIntyre pointed out to Mr. Wong that the double patenting rejection in this case should be withdrawn, under MPEP 804.I.B, since this is the first of these three cases to be allowed. Mr. Dong agreed that the provisional double patenting rejection in this case should be withdrawn.

Information Disclosure Statements

The Examiner indicated that he did not have copies of the following information disclosure statements:

1. June 17, 2002 – 30 references
2. April 4, 2003 – 1 reference
3. February 4, 2004 – 3 references;

and requested that copies of the 1449 forms of those IDSs, along with copies of any non-US patent references listed therein, be supplied. Accordingly, copies of the appropriate 1449 forms and non-US patent references accompany this Amendment.

Double-Patenting Rejections

Claims 1, 22, 26, 43 and 50 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double-patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 26 and 34 of co-pending U.S. Application Serial No. 10/014,278 (the '278 application). Furthermore, claims 1, 22, 26, 43 and 50 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double-patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 19, 20 and 29 of co-pending U.S. Application Serial No. 10/015,151 (the '151 application). Applicants respectfully request that the provisional obviousness-type double-patenting rejection be withdrawn in this case, in accordance with MPEP § 804.I.B, since the other two cases are still pending.

Conclusion

It is believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early allowance of all pending claims.

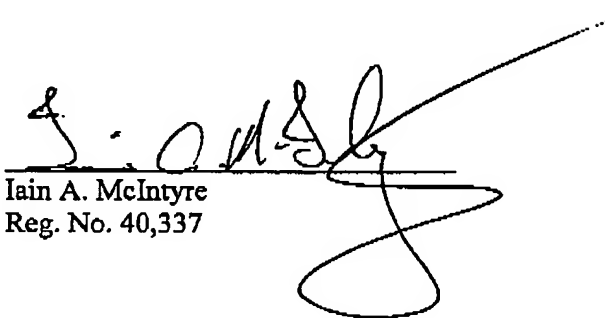
If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' attorney of record, Iain A. McIntyre at 612-436-9610.

Respectfully submitted,

CCVL P.A.
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By:


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